

EXPANSION TO PROVIDE ALTERNATIVE ROUTE PREPARATION THROUGH REGIONAL TEACHER PREPARATION CONSORTIA

The major goals for this expansion effort are:

1. Challenge and support higher education institutions in extending the reach of alternative route teacher preparation to meet regional teaching shortages.
2. Support the transformation of alternative route higher education teacher preparation programs, and eventually all higher education preparation, to programs that are truly performance-based.

GOAL 1: Challenge and support higher education institutions in extending the reach of alternative route preparation to meet regional teaching shortages.

Objective 1.1 – Create and pilot a unique cross-institutional model of teacher preparation: regional teacher preparation consortia.

Objective 1.2 – Strategically locate two new consortium programs in ESDs 101 and 105.

Objective 1.3 - Recruit locally from among experienced paraeducators and mid-career professionals within the targeted regions and employ them in their communities.

Key characteristics of this new consortium model are:

- **Partnership.** Each consortium will consist of higher education institutions, an ESD, and the districts within that ESD.
- **Location.** The program locations were pre-determined based on data from the 2002 *Educator Supply and Demand in Washington State* report.
- **Governance.** A governance structure will provide oversight for program development and implementation, perhaps to replicate the PEAB model that advises educator preparation programs.
- **Local recruitment and retention.** Candidates who participate in the consortium program will be limited to individuals seeking to teach in subject areas that match the specific regional teaching shortage areas.

The **benefits** of the consortium model are that it:

- **Creates a strategy to solve local shortages locally.**
- **Is fiscally responsible.**
- **Is ethically responsible and market-based.**
- **Is cost-effective.**
- **Capitalizes on the purpose and function of ESDs.**

GOAL 2: Support the transformation of alternative route higher education teacher preparation programs, and eventually all higher education preparation, to programs that are truly performance-based.

Objective 2.1 – Address and overcome barriers to implementation identified by higher education institutions.

Objective 2.2 – Tailor the program to experienced paraeducators and mid-career professionals, ensuring that it is developmentally appropriate and recognizes and accommodates prior learning and experience.

Objective 2.3 - Create a performance-based program format common across institutions that can be easily replicated, using the consortia model, in different regions depending upon need.

The **common design elements** of a performance-based alternative route preparation program which will be implemented by the consortia are:

- **Performance-based mentored internship** of one year or less;
- **Field-based** with all **formalized learning opportunities** offered on or near school sites, on-line, or via K-20;
- **Teacher Development Plan** that identifies the alternative route program requirements for each candidate based upon an assessment of prior experience and education;
- **High quality and quantity mentoring**, including completion of training specifically designed for interns mentors; and
- **First year teacher support** provided by trained mentor teachers via the Teacher Assistance Program (TAP).

In creating the consortia model, the goal is to build upon what we've learned from the first round of alternative route programs, capitalizing on factors that attracted participants to the program – flexibility, applied school-based design, competency-based, acknowledges prior experience, and accessibility to where they live and want to teach – while addressing barriers that interfere with efforts to transform higher education teacher preparation to truly performance-based programs.

Barriers that were identified and the means by which the consortia model will address them include:

- **A credit/seat-time driven tuition structure.** The consortium programs will be “package-priced” with revenue sharing occurring across the institutions.
- **A testing culture within higher education versus an assessment culture.** While some testing is essential, candidates will be primarily assessed against a set of learner outcomes for which candidates would present evidence to document their performance.
- **Inconsistency among programs in translating certification standards into learner outcomes and rubrics to assess those outcomes.** The design phase for the programs will involve members of the consortia identifying a common set of program outcomes and a common set of rubrics by which those outcomes will be assessed.

- **A teaching versus learning paradigm that governs higher education.** The mission of consortium programs is to produce learning with every candidate by whatever means works best. In turn, candidates are expected to provide evidence of their positive impact on the learning of K-12 students.
- **Procedures (i.e., registration, transcribing, curriculum approval processes, financial aid) that are incompatible with performance-based programs.** The consortium members will explore solutions such as “blocking learner outcomes” on transcripts and registration for the entire program upon acceptance.
- **Difficulty with designing assessment systems that compile and summarize candidate performance data to inform programmatic changes.** As part of the program design phase, common data elements will be identified, with particular attention to those critical to program enhancement.
- **Faculty load and assignments.** Inasmuch as the consortium programs will shift from courses and seat-time to “formalized learning opportunities”, solutions will be explored to resolve potential conflicts with institutional faculty load policies.
- **Ways in which the K-12 context can inform the identification of authentic activities/experiences through which certification standards can be achieved.** Practitioners will contribute to the identification of authentic classroom-based activities and environments in which candidate performance can be demonstrated and assessed.